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ABSTRACT

This study documents and compares practictioner-mentor roles in two fifth-year internship programs: a master's degree program and an alternative certification program. In addition, it seeks to determine personal and professional factors believed to be responsible for mentor success achieved. A brief summary of the premises upon which both intern assistance programs rest is provided. A total of 42 teachers served as practitioner-mentors and responded to a 26-item Likert scale on the mentor role. Personal characteristics and competencies ratings were solicited through use of a 32-item Likert scale. Ratings of mentor success and school-related features that facilitated mentoring were obtained through a similar scale. Questions the study sought to answer were: (1) What practitioner-mentor roles were performed by the teachers in the assistance programs? (2) What personal characteristics and professional competencies were considered important? (3) How do practitioner-mentors rate the success they achieved and does this vary by program? and (4) What school-context factors enhance or hinder the success of mentors? Responses of mentors in the master's program tended to be more positive than those of mentors in the alternative program. Findings are reported and discussed, and data resulting from the study are presented in tables. Eleven references are included. (JD)

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FIFTH-YEAR INDUCTION INTERNSHIPS AND MENTOR ROLES

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Paper presented in the Symposium:
Overview and Analysis of Three Models of Teacher Induction

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Introduction

As an advance organizer for the presentation, and to establish a mindset for presenting specific data and findings regarding support systems and fifth-year internships, we would like to reference a paper prepared as background material for the State of Illinois (Griffin and Millies, 1986). In keeping with the trend found in many states (Hawk & Robards, 1987), the Illinois Department of Education is considering developing a beginning teacher program as a state responsibility.

The author of the paper (Gehrke, 1986) used the first two lines of the lyrics of the song, "Free to Be You and Me" to introduce two types of "help". The lines are:

> Some kind of help is the help that helping's all about.
> And some kind of help is the kind of help we could all do without.

In treating the topic initially, Gehrke hypothesized that current induction assistance programs "may be giving the beginner the kind of help we could do without" (p. 105). Her specific concern was with the programs "full of packets and packaged instructional programs of direct intervention but often devoid of real enabling help, authentic affirming dialogue"...which "...show no regard for the rituals human beings need and little understanding of the stages of newcomers or their preferences for socializing agents"(p.

112). Formalized programs, she feels, may "undermine the development of natural helping environments and create costly, destructive situations far worse than the lonely, trial-by-fire initiation of beginners of the past" (p. 105).

We would like to emphasize the conception of "help" presented in the opening line of the song (Some kind of help is the help that helping's all about) and briefly summarize the premises on which a formalized intern assistance program has been developed and implemented. Moreover, our stance is that the "lonely, trial-by-fire initiation" of the past is an invalid conceptualization on which teacher induction should be grounded. Thus, in cooperation with participating LEAs, we have sought to design a formal assistance program that compliments informal, "natural helping environments", available to interns in specific school contexts.

Premises Undergirding the College's Assistance Program

Premises on which our fifth-year internship assistance program rest are:

1. We see novice teachers as receptive to the socialization function, open to the "kind of help..that helping's all about", which is the type of help we desire to provide. The conception we hold of teacher socialization incorporates "self-socialization" (Brim & Wheeler, 1966). In this view, socialization is not just an imposition of

norms, values, and roles on an unwilling actor: actors have choices in the matter. While institutional contexts may press them to accept the constraints, satisfy the expectations, and behave according to norms and conventions of the workplace, they may resist, refuse to modify their behaviors, and even seek to create instructional and institutional realities that challenge conventions and traditions. Initiation rituals imposed by the school under the "trial-by-fire" induction, moreover, are not, we believe, appropriate for creating reflective/inquiring professionals who will complete their induction period with commitment to remain in the classroom. Intentionality has brought the interns to a point in time in which they want to learn how to be successful teachers. To this goal we have committed our resources.

2. Internship assistance, we believe, is best framed within the conception of adult development, of which career development of teachers is but one aspect. Therefore, our attempts at designing assistance rest on various notions of adult development including relationships adults seek as support through which they share their victories and defeats, and on which they can rely as support for stress-reduction, confidence building, and self validation. Professional teacher development, and resulting instructional improvement, is therefore conceptualized as occurring in concert with a collegiality that is recommended

as appropriate by various contemporary writers on the subject (Galvez-Hzornevik, 1986; Heck & Williams, 1984). Such collegiality insures support, critique, as well as reciprocity and "authentic affirming dialogue" (Gehrke, 1986).

3. We view the "help that helping's all about" as more than technical assistance, though such assistance is particularly important early in the program. We conceive of quality assistance and support as moving beyond technical help, resulting in social-bonding that can be beneficial to both parties. (Etheridge and Butler, 1987; James, Butler, Etheridge, and Middlebrook, 1987). Such bonding is viewed as developing on a continuum through which emotional or affective processes develop through interpersonal caring, protection, and validation. The conception is congruent with the affect-neutral and affect-laden model proposed by Gehrke (1986; 1981). Both formal and informal helping relationships can, we believe, result in such outcomes. While the programmatic intent is to create formalized structures through which such interactions may result, we recognize that all may not and are pleased if informal ones emerge which provide the type of support valued. Given the variety of professionals within school contexts, interns are presented with numerous opportunities to form informal helping relationships and are expected to act on their own preferences in selecting those socializing agents available.

The 1986-87 Induction Assistance Study

Purpose and Questions

The purpose of the study was to document and compare practitioner-mentor roles in two fifth-year internship programs implemented in 1986-87 and to determine personal and professional factors believed to be responsible for mentor success achieved. (See the other papers presented in the symposium for descriptions of the programs and induction support provided.)

Questions which the study sought to answer were:

1. What practitioner-mentor roles were performed by teachers who served in the assistance programs created for the fifth-year internships in 1986-87 and do these vary by program?

2. What personal characteristics and professional competencies do practitioner-mentors report as being important in contributing to the success they achieved and do these vary by program?

3. How do practitioner-mentors rate the success they achieved as mentors and do these vary by program?

4. What school-context factors were reported by the practitioner-mentors as enhancing/hindering their success and do these vary by program?

Profile of the Practitioner-Mentors

A total of 42 teachers served in 1986-87 as practitioner-mentors in the two programs: 27 in Program 1 (MAT degree program) and 15 in Program 2 (fifth-year alternative certification program). Years of teaching experience consisted of 57 percent (n=24) with 16 or more years of experience. Twelve (30 percent) had taught between 11-15 years, 1 between 6-10 years, and 5 (12 percent) for five years of less. Eleven (26 percent) had never worked with student teachers while six (14 percent) had worked with 6 or more. Half of the mentors (n= 21) served in the program for the first time; the others had been mentors the previous year, during the inaugural year of the programs.

Sixty percent (n=25) held masters degrees; 13 (31 percent) held bachelors degree and 3 had completed post-master programs. In terms of Tennessee Career Ladder Status, 17 (41 percent) were at level II, 1 was at level III; 18 at level I. Information was not provided for 3. Their age groups involved 1 being less than 30, 13 (31 percent) were in the 31-40 age group, 15 (36 percent) between 41 and 50; 7 were over 50. Racially they were reported as 32 (76 percent) majority and 10 (24 percent) minority.

Teaching specializations of the mentors included 14 (33 percent) in English, 8 in the natural sciences, 5 in math, 4

in social studies, 3 in business, 2 each in home economics and foreign language. Four did not report this information. Their school assignments were mostly at the secondary level in two large city (n= 24) and county (n= 13) systems. Five taught in smaller, rural systems. Thirty-two (76 percent) were in senior high schools. Others were in combined junior-senior high schools or middle schools, and 4 held positions in elementary schools.

Instrumentation

Data relative to mentor roles were obtained through use of a 26 item Likert scale and personal characteristics and competencies ratings were solicited through use of a 32 item Likert scale. Response options were from 1 to 5. Ratings of mentor success and 10 school-related features which facilitated mentoring were also obtained through use of 1-5 options. Role designation and mentor characteristics and competencies items were based on the mentor literature and findings of mentor role performances and competencies in the first year of operating the programs (Butler, 1986). The psychometric properties of the various scales are currently being established.

Findings

Question 1. What practitioner-mentor roles were performed by teachers who served in the assistance programs created for

the fifth-year internships in 1986-87 and do these vary by program?

As shown in Table 1, the 26 mentor role performance items have been logically grouped under three broad categories of assistance: instruction, context-related, and personal/professional. Mentors in both programs reported performing all 26 roles with Program 1 mentors rating 13 of the instructional assistance items as high (4.00 or more) while Program 2 mentors rated only 2 of these items as high. On context-related assistance, Program 1 mentors assigned high ratings to 4 of the 6 context-related items and 3 of the 7 personal/professional items. In these two categories, Program 2 mentors rated 3 of the context items as high and 1 of the personal/professional items. Items rated high by both groups, with means which did not differ statistically, were sharing of knowledge about teaching (#2) and introducing intern to others in the school (#7).

Ratings of mentor role were analyzed statistically through use of independent samples t-tests with significant variations found for 10 of the 13 instructional assistance ratings, 2 context-related ratings, and 1 rating of personal/professional assistance. Significantly different mean ratings for instructional assistance included planning instruction and problem-solving (#1,#4), scheduling regular conferences (#5), monitoring, observing, evaluating,

advising and coaching (#6, #8, #9, #16), assisting with materials, equipment, and content (#18, #21, #25), and sharing of materials (#24). Program 1 mentor means were significantly higher than Program 2 mentor means on all these instructional-related dimensions. Significantly different ratings for context-related assistance were found for sharing knowledge about the school and school system (#3) and informing interns about deadlines and forthcoming events (#10). In both cases, Program 1 mentors assigned significantly higher ratings. For the personal/professional assistance category, Program 1 mentors rated as significantly higher their serving as a confidant and counselor (#11).

A correlation analysis of the ratings of the total set of items by the two groups yielded a statistically significant association ($r = .80$ $p < .01$). While ratings yielded by mentors in the two programs differed on 13 of the 26 items comprising the scale, a strong association existed between the two sets of ratings. The two groups of mentors, then, assigned similar levels of importance to their various tasks, defining their overall roles in similar ways. For example, sharing knowledge of the school and system was rated high by both groups while assisting in resolving conflicts the interns had with others received low ratings.

Similarity of mentor role performance patterns, as assessed here, existed in both induction schemes.

Question 2. What personal characteristics and professional competencies do practitioner-mentors report as being important in contributing to the success they achieved and do these vary by program?

In regard to personal characteristics and professional competencies practitioner-mentors felt contributed to the level of mentor success achieved, the respondents were remarkably similar in their ratings (see Table 3). High ratings (4.00 or above) were assigned to 23 of the 32 items by Program 1 mentors and similar ratings assigned to 17 of the items by Program 2 participants. The highest ratings of both groups were for ability to plan and organize instruction (#8), confidence as a role model (#18), commitment to the teaching profession (#19), and being honest and open with the intern (#21). Lowest ratings were assigned by both groups to being of similar age (#13), being older or younger (#14), and being of the same sex and race (#15, #16). Correlation analysis of the two sets of ratings resulted in a statistically strong association ($r = .96$, $p < .001$).

The independent samples t-test analyses resulted in only two ratings that were significantly different:

understanding of mentor role/relationship (#26) and having compatible beliefs and values (#32). Signficantly higher ratings for both of these were reported by Program 1 mentors.

Question 3. How do practitioner-mentors rate the success they achieved as mentors and do these vary by program?

Asked to rate themselves globally, Program 1 mentors, with a group mean of 4.20 (s.d.= .66) rated themselves higher than their their counterparts in Program 2 whose group mean was 3.53 (s.d.= 1.20). This difference was significant at the .05 level. This difference in rating is viewed as consistent with the data reported earlier on mentor role (see Table 1).

Question 4. What school-context factors were reported by the practitioner-mentors as enhancing/hindering their success and do these vary by program?

Both groups of mentors gave high mean ratings (see Table 3) to the courses the interns taught (#3) and support provided by university personnel (#7) as school-context factors which enhanced their mentor roles. These high ratings did not differ significantly. Significantly different ratings were, however, found for class schedules of mentor and intern (#1), mentors' non-teaching responsibilities (#2), administrative support (#5),

workspace provided the interns (#9), and provisions for conferencing/planning (#10). Higher mean ratings for these school factors were assigned by Program 1 mentors. Internship designs associated with the two programs vary extensively with the more positive perceptions of these features being reported by those teachers serving as mentors in the MAT program.

Conclusions

Mean ratings of mentor roles indicate that both groups performed all 26 roles assessed and role patterns were similar, as reflected in the high measure of association yielded between the two data sets. Mentor support in both programs was heavily oriented toward providing instruction-related assistance. Variations observed between the individual ratings were associated with Program 1 mentors rating 13 of the 26 roles significantly higher. An interpretation of these findings is that mentor-intern relationships in the two programs differed with mentor ratings of role in Program 1 being viewed more positively. Higher ratings given to the personal/professional dimensions by Program 1 participants on assisting with personal problems, serving as an advocate, defender, role model, and sponsor suggest a response pattern consistent with the statistically significant different rating assigned to

serving as a confidant and counselor, an affect-laden dimension exhibiting systematic variation across the programs. The data support the contention that more than technical assistance was provided in both programs with enhanced social-bondings resulting from affect-laden patterns of interactions associated with Program 1.

Both mentor groups stressed personality and professional characteristics --instructional competence, honesty and openness in the relationship, professional confidence, commitment to teaching--and minimized race, sex, or age as contributing to mentor success. Program 1 mentors placed higher importance on holding compatible educational ideologies with the interns and understanding the mentor role. The higher mean ratings may have resulted from extended interactions and close contact provided in the MAT induction program. Regular and sustained support should provide opportunities to share personal philosophies and attain increased understanding of the mentor role, especially as it changed over time.

The data indicate that both induction programs and subsequent mentor functions were viewed positively in regard to placement of interns with their classes and support provided the mentors by university personnel. Other school-related features were, however, found to vary with significantly more positive ratings consistently associated

with Program 1. School-related factors assessed here appear to relate to programmatic differences existing between the two types of internships and provisions for mentor functions in the schools. Positive support for the MAT program, documented here and in other reports, may be reflected in the ratings assigned to school-context factors.

In regard to the formal/informal aspects of the mentor-intern relationships, the data indicate that postive results were achieved. There is no evidence that formalized induction assistance created destructive situations hypothesized by Gehrke.

In conclusion, implementation of the two internship induction schemes yielded documented variations in mentor role, differences in success ratings achieved, and variations in school factors contributing to the success achieved. Given the designs of the two internships and their attendant constraints and opportunities for intern-mentor interactions, these data are not surprising. As part-time teachers for the entire school year, Program 2 interns' interactions with the mentors may have been limited by the circumstances of role. In the highly structured world of schooling where time is a critical factor, opportunities for Program 2 mentor-intern interactions of quality (that is, of appreciable length and complexity) may have been limited, even with the reducted teaching loads of the interns. While

both groups of mentors regarded sharing knowledge of school and system and informing the interns of deadlines and events as important, Program 1 mentors seemed better able to follow through on other dimensions of induction support.

Table 1

Mentor Role Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations by Program

	Program 1		Program 2		
	X	SD	X	SD	p<
INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANCE					
1. Assisted in planning instruction	4.19	.80	3.15	1.28	.01
2. Shared knowledge about teaching	4.69	.70	4.00	1.41	
4. Assisted in problem solving	4.58	.64	3.92	.76	.05
5. Scheduled regular conferences	4.11	.99	2.85	1.95	.05
6. Monitored intern's activities	4.38	.70	3.85	.69	
8. Observed and evaluated intern	4.40	.65	3.54	1.33	.05
9. Advised the intern	4.68	.48	4.31	.63	.05
16. Coached intern in skill refinement	4.21	.88	2.77	1.42	.01
18. Assisted in securing/using materials	4.48	.77	3.46	1.33	.01
19. Assisted with classroom management	4.08	.76	3.23	1.70	
21. Assisted intern with use of equipment	4.00	1.47	2.54	1.61	.01
24. Shared teaching materials	4.92	.28	3.53	1.71	.01
25. Assisted with subject content	4.60	.58	3.23	1.59	.01
CONTEXT-RELATED ASSISTANCE					
3. Shared knowledge about school/system	4.92	.27	4.38	.77	.05
7. Introduced intern to others	4.77	.51	4.30	.75	
10. Informed the intern of deadlines/events	4.76	.43	4.38	.77	.05
15. Shared knowledge about nuances of school	4.38	1.05	3.67	1.88	
20. Assisted in facilitating evaluation	3.50	1.18	3.08	1.73	
26. Assisted in resolving conflicts	2.22	2.06	2.39	1.85	
PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE					
11. Served as a confidant and counselor	4.64	.63	4.08	1.26	.05
12. Assisted intern with personal problems	3.22	1.68	2.46	1.90	
13. Served as advocate for the intern	4.00	1.47	3.62	1.50	
14. Served as defender for the intern	3.70	1.74	3.17	1.70	
17. Served as role model	4.44	.96	3.85	.69	
22. Served as sponsor for the intern	3.86	1.65	3.33	1.37	
23. Involved intern professionally	3.73	.96	3.50	1.45	

Table 2

Mentor Ratings of Characteristics by Program

	Program 1		Program 2		
	X	SD	X	SD	
1. Interest in the careers of new teachers	4.76	.44	4.54	.66	
2. Professional preparation/experience	4.48	.82	4.69	.48	
3. Personal philosophy and attitudes	4.36	.81	4.46	.66	
4. Problem solving competencies	4.52	.65	4.38	.65	
5. Human relations skills	4.52	.82	4.30	.63	
6. Understanding teaching and learning	4.60	.71	4.30	.85	
7. Competence relating theory/practice	4.48	.71	4.15	.99	
8. Ability to plan/organize instruction	4.68	.56	4.62	.51	
9. Competencies in communication	4.60	.50	4.53	.78	
10. Understanding of subject matter	4.76	.44	4.46	1.39	
11. Involvement in professional activities	4.20	1.29	3.92	1.55	
12. Having compatable personal backgrounds	3.60	1.61	3.46	1.76	
13. Being of similar age as the intern	1.33	1.73	1.58	1.68	
14. Being much older/younger than the intern	1.20	1.61	1.46	1.56	
15. Being of the same sex as the intern	1.58	1.89	1.30	1.80	
16. Being of the same race as the intern	1.42	1.73	.69	1.03	
17. Understanding schools as complex systems	4.29	1.04	3.92	1.32	
18. Confidence as a professional role mode	4.84	.37	4.62	.65	
19. Commitment to the teaching profession	4.84	.37	4.77	.60	
20. Being accessible to the intern	4.72	.54	4.30	1.18	
21. Being honest/open with the intern	4.88	.33	4.69	.48	
22. Demonstrating respect for the intern	4.80	.50	4.38	1.12	
23. Accepting the intern's individuality	4.68	.75	4.38	.65	
24. Being able to grow/develop in relationship	4.48	1.08	3.85	1.28	
25. Status/recognition associated with mentors	2.96	1.94	2.54	1.81	
26. Understanding of mentor role/relationship	4.52	.65	3.54	1.76	*
27. Having free period to observe/confer	4.04	1.59	3.31	2.21	
28. Holding Career Level II or III status	2.08	2.04	1.53	2.10	
29. Having several years experience	4.44	1.21	4.23	1.36	
30. Holding position of influence on faculty	3.21	1.41	2.69	2.10	
31. Having compatible teaching styles	3.48	1.48	2.62	2.02	
32. Having compatible beliefs/values	4.36	1.11	3.46	1.81	*

* $p < .05$

Table 3

Mentor Ratings of School-Related Features

	Program 1		Program 2		
	X	SD	X	SD	
1. Class schedules of mentor and intern	4.00	1.35	2.38	1.94	**
2. Mentor's non-teaching responsibilities	3.64	1.41	2.54	1.66	*
3. Courses intern taught	4.44	.71	4.50	.67	
4. Level of students in the intern's classes	3.80	.82	3.75	1.29	
5. Support provided by administration	4.40	.82	3.38	1.50	*
6. Support provided by the school faculty	4.07	.83	3.69	1.55	
7. Support provided by university personnel	4.32	.99	4.15	1.28	
8. Information provided about mentor role	4.32	.75	3.36	1.63	*
9. Workspace provided the intern	4.00	1.04	2.38	1.90	**
10. Provisions for conferencing/planning	4.20	1.25	2.50	2.60	**

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

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